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claims:

1. a toy building block including:

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(a) a first pair of respectively transversely extending face panels provided with male gender connection formation means facilitating connection with respective adjacently arranged blocks, the male gender connection formation means for each face panel comprising at least two substantially identical studs;

(b) a second pair of respectively transversely extending face panels provided with female gender connection formation means facilitating connection with respective adjacently arranged blocks, the female gender connection formation means for each face panel comprising at least two substantially identical sockets;

wherein, the sockets are shaped and dimensioned to be push-fit/interference-fit engageable with respective studs on adjacently connecting corresponding blocks, the studs and sockets on the face panels of the block being so spaced and configured to permit connection with opposite gender face panels in a plurality of connection configurations, including a face panel aligned configuration and a face panel overlap configuration.

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2. A toy building block according to claim 1, wherein the studs and sockets on the male and female gender face panels are spaced from one another by a distance of substantially  $2x$ , where  $x$  is the distance between the edge of the panel and the nearest extremity of a respective stud or socket.

3. A toy building block according to claim 2, wherein the distance between the extremities of a stud or socket (corresponding to the diameter for circular perimeter formations) is substantially  $2x$ .

4. A toy building block according to any preceding claim, wherein the outer perimeter of the face panels is substantially square such that the overall configuration of the block is cuboid.

5. A toy building block according to claim 4, wherein the respective studs and sockets on the male and female gender face panels are arranged in  $2 \times 2$  arrays.

6. A toy building block according to any preceding claim including face panels moulded of different coloured plastics.

7. A toy building block according to any preceding claim, wherein non-opposed face panels are of substantially the same face area.

8. A toy building block according to any preceding claim

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wherein opposed face panels are of substantially the same face area.

- 5 9. A toy building block according to any preceding claim, wherein at least one of the faces of the block is without connection formation means.
- 10 10. A toy building block according to any preceding claim wherein a pair of opposed face panels are without connection formation means.
- 15 11. A toy building block according to claim 9 or 10, wherein one or more face panels without connection means are arranged to carry an indicia, design, character or other graphic representation.
- 20 12. A toy building block according to any preceding claim, wherein opposed faces of the block are provided with connection formations of opposed gender.
- 25 13. A toy building block according to any preceding claim, wherein the connection formation means for a respective face comprises an array of formations arranged to mate with a complementary array provided on an adjacently connecting block.
- 30 14. A toy building block according to claim 13, wherein each respective array comprises formations of all male studs or all female recesses.

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15. A toy building block according to any preceding claim, wherein the depth/height of the formations is less than the width dimension (e.g. the diameter) of the respective formation.
  16. A toy building block according to any preceding claim, wherein toy block is substantially hollow.
  17. A toy building block according to any preceding claim, wherein the face panels are of moulded plastics material the connection formation means being integrally moulded with the respective faces.
  18. A toy building block according to any preceding claim, wherein the block comprises a moulded plastics building block comprising a moulded shell element including wall panels moulded to be configured rigidly extending transversely to one another in fixed relationship with a defined angle therebetween, and closure means to close a hollow interior of the block, the closure means including one or more wall panel elements to be connected to the shell element.
  19. A toy building construction system or kit comprising a plurality of building blocks according to any preceding claim.
  20. A method of manufacturing a toy building block, the method comprising assembling:
    - i) a moulded plastics shell element including wall

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panels moulded to be configured rigidly extending transversely to one another in fixed relationship with a defined angle therebetween; and,

- ii) a separate wall panel element connecting with the walled shell element to close an interior of the block.

21. A method according to claim 20, wherein the shell element is formed having connection formation means formed integrally with the respective face panels.

22. A method according to claim 21, wherein:

- i) the moulded shell element is formed having male connection formation means on a first face panel and female connection means on a second face panel; and/or

- ii) the moulded shell element is formed having connection formation means on opposed face panels.

23. A method according to any of claims 20 to 22, wherein the shell element and the separate end wall panels are provided with complementary engageable securing formations permitting the end face panel to be securely effectively permanently fixed across the shell element.

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24. A method according to claim 23, wherein the complementary engaging securing formations are preferably configured such that either a push fit engagement or a snap fit engagement is provided.

25. A method according to claim 23 or claim 24, wherein the complementary engaging securing formations are provided at the periphery of the face panel element and the opening of the shell element.

26. A method according to any of claims 23 to 25, wherein the complementary engaging securing formations comprise:

- i) pins arranged to be received in complementary dimensioned bores in a push fit engagement; and/or
- ii) tongue and groove like mating elements (such as a tab receivable in a slot) extending along one or more edges of the face panel element and shell element.

27. A method according to any of claims 20 to 26, wherein the shell element comprises a substantially tubular element having opposed open ends, each of which is closed by a respective separate end wall panel element.

28. An assemblage comprising a plurality of adjacently

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connected blocks according to any of claims 1 to 19, respective blocks including respective image elements having commonly coded image edge portions which permit image elements to be positioned in an edge adjacent relationship in a plurality of configurations in which the commonly coded image edge portions of adjacent elements are matched substantially to one another.

29. A building block comprising a male gender face panel having an array of rows and columns of stud formations and a female gender face panel having an array of socket formations corresponding to the male array of studs, the studs and sockets on the male and female gender face panels are spaced from one another by a distance of substantially  $2x$ , where  $x$  is the distance between the edge of the panel and the nearest extremity of a respective stud or socket.

30. An assemblage comprising a plurality of image elements having commonly coded image edge portions which permit image elements to be positioned in an edge adjacent relationship in a plurality of configurations in which the commonly coded image edge portions of adjacent elements are matched substantially to one another.

31. An assemblage according to claim 30, wherein a respective image element comprises upper and lower edges and two side edges such that the image element is substantially rectangular or square, the upper

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edge being coded to match with the lower edge and the side edges coded to match one another.

5      32. An assemblage according to any of claims 30 or 31, wherein a respective image element comprises upper and lower edges and two side edges such that the image element is substantially rectangular or square, the image elements being provided with first and second opposed edges of a first common image coding and third and fourth edges of a second common image coding.

33. An assemblage according to claim 32, wherein the coded image element edge portions are coded imagewise such that the coding of the edge portions is effected by portions of a general image or scene depicted upon relevant image elements.

20      34. An assemblage according to any of claims 30 to 33, wherein the coded image element edge portions are colour coded by means of coloured edge zones.

25      35. An assemblage according to claim 34, wherein the coloured edge zones comprise a backing to a primary image, character or other emblem depicted on the element.

30      36. A toy building construction kit or set comprising:

- i) a plurality of a toy building blocks including face panels (preferably substantially



~~perpendicular face panels) provided with connection formation means facilitating connection with an adjacently arranged blocks; and,~~

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